

progress has been made in Maryland during the past several years, there is much more to be done before we would be justified in saying that we have done what is possible to create the kind of environment in which these people can live among us in a measure of security and happiness to which they are entitled. This is our goal — a goal which we must pursue unremittingly. I earnestly solicit your advice and assistance, and the advice and assistance of all Marylanders, in its attainment.

The role of the nursing home in the total field of medical care is a development which has taken place within relatively recent years. Maryland has developed an excellent program for the treatment of the chronically ill, a program which is concentrated largely in the older group of our citizens. The State is operating, as you know, three excellent hospitals for chronic diseases. Nursing homes such as you operate complement the services of these hospitals and the general hospitals of the State. By providing long-term care after acute stages of the disease, and after rehabilitation services have carried the patient to the point of maximum hospital benefits, the nursing home has become an important institution for the maximum use of beds in general and chronic disease hospitals.

The progress we have made here in Maryland can be attributed to the cooperative effort of the State, nursing home administrators, this association and others in the health field. Reports I have received from officials in our Department of Health and from officers of this organization indicate clearly that there is a full measure of cooperation and mutual respect between the licensed nursing homes and our licensing agency, the Department of Health. The mutual esteem and cordiality that exists is, of course, most gratifying to me. Without it we could not hope to harvest the best fruits of our efforts.

We in Maryland can point with pride to the fact that the regulations and standards under which our nursing homes operate are among the highest in the country. As you know, these standards and regulations were developed jointly by our health officials and representatives of this Association. The purpose of these rules, of course, is to assure patients and their families that our nursing homes will provide a safe and sanitary environment and nursing care and medical supervision adequate for the needs of the patients.

I can assure you that the attitude of your State government, including all departments and agencies having a relationship with nursing homes, is one of cooperation and helpfulness. I am fully aware that from time to time some of you have experienced some problems in